



**SEIUHealthcare.**  
United for Quality Care

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Laura Nasser, PCA  
Wallingford  
District 1199 New England  
Before the Appropriations Committee

Good Evening Senator Osten, Representative Walker and members of the Committee, my name is Laura Nassar and I have been a PCA for 8 years. I live in Wallingford and I love my consumer. I am a caretaker at heart and I am lucky that I get to get paid for doing what I love. It is satisfying to care for someone else's needs. There is nothing I don't do for him. I go grocery shopping, I take him to doctor appointments, I run errands, cook and clean, and assist with preparing for the day. He is in a wheelchair full time and I take a lot of pride in the fact that I can help him. It's important for me to be there or else he would not be able to take care of himself. He can't be independent without assistance.

He even calls on me for help in off hours. I go in on off hours to help him and don't get paid for it. I do this because he needs the help. He gets nervous that he won't be able to get out of bed or eat without my help. If I were able to work more hours with him and get paid for them he wouldn't have to feel bad about calling me on off hours and I would be able to spend more time giving him care.

The lack of paid time off, mileage reimbursement, health insurance and retirement frustrates and worries me. When I get sick I can't go to the doctor, I have to treat myself. I am late on my rent every month. I have to wait until I get 2 paychecks to pay my rent. If I miss a paycheck it throws me off for longer than a month.

I don't get mileage reimbursement but use my car mainly to do things for my client. I am often at home without gas because I need to make sure I have enough to meet his needs for the week every week.

I feel like I work for Bank of America because I have so many late fees. That's 3 hours of late fees out of my check every week. I don't work for Bank of America, but I feel like it.

I have a very small studio for myself and I make enough money just to cover that, and if there's anything that comes above, there's no other money. I can retire at lunchtime on the day of my funeral because we also don't have any retirement.

On February 17th, I protested and got arrested with my sister and brother PCAs. I wouldn't have done that if I did not feel it was necessary to protect services for my consumer and get better wages and benefits for myself and other PCAs.

Thank you for your time.